

RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT



11-37

MOTORCYCLE OFFICER STRIKE TEAM (MOST) OPERATING MANUAL

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POLICY

It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department to deploy marked police package Harley Davidson Motorcycles as a highly specialized vehicle utilized for any activity for whereby a vehicle of superior acceleration and mobility is necessary or prudent. It is recognized nationwide as the superior traffic enforcement vehicle.

Richmond's utilization of Police Motorcycles took a quantum leap in 1997 with the creation of the Motorcycle Officer Strike Team – M.O.S.T. The new unit was created to be more responsive to the needs of the community. The scope of their activities is unparalleled.

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this document to establish the policy, procedure and responsibilities of the Motorcycle Officer Strike Team in the execution of their daily duties as it relates to the overall mission of the Richmond Police Department. The M.O.S.T Unit will utilize the Motorcycle in a highly professional, proactive and innovative manner to address issues of public safety and mutual concern of both the community and the City Government. The police motorcycle is a highly specialized vehicle utilized for any activity for whereby a vehicle of superior acceleration and mobility is necessary or prudent. It is recognized nationwide as the superior traffic enforcement vehicle.

DUTIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

The Motorcycle Officer Strike Team duties consist of but are not limited to the following:

- A.** Traffic Enforcement – Radar
 - 1. High accident locations
 - 2. Speeding – Traffic complaints
 - 3. Speed Surveys
 - 4. School Zones
 - 5. Reduced Speed Zones
 - 6. Selected areas – high visibility patrol
 - 7. Motor Carrier Enforcement (DOT)
 - 8. Motorcycle Training
- B.** Traffic Accidents
 - 1. First responder
 - 2. Work Non-reportable Accidents
- C.** Traffic Control-Directional – Initial Responder
 - 1. Major Fires
 - 2. Crowds

3. Disasters
4. Special Event

NOTE: Motor Units should not be placed on stationary posts. They should be replaced by other personnel as soon as possible as motors are best suited for navigating congested traffic, special events, and disasters making them the most effective officers in the Department to respond to unfolding occurrences and directed patrol.

D. Escorts

1. V.I.P.
2. Funerals
3. Parades
4. Other Special Activities

E. High Crime Areas-Utilize aggressive traffic enforcement to combat crime and interdict illegal firearms and narcotics.

F. Motorcycles (Dual Purpose Motorcycles) that are assigned to precincts will work under the direction of the respective officers in charge.

Speeding Complaints

Motorcycle officers handle most of the daytime workday speeding complaints through the use of Stalker Radar units. Due to the motorcycle's small size and high mobility, the motorcycle can work effectively in areas where regular traffic cars cannot. Lowering the speeds in these selected locations will reduce the number and severity of accidents. Further, by M.O.S.T. officers identifying problem areas with proactive patrol and speed enforcement duties the frequency of citizen complaints will be reduced and the protection of life and property efforts enhanced.

Below, a motorcycle officer is operating RADAR on Cedar Grove Ave. in the City's south side area.



Traffic Accidents

Motorcycle officers will be the first responder to traffic accidents. Due to the high mobility of the motorcycle the M.O.S.T. officer can respond to the scene despite heavy traffic, allowing for quicker response by medical personnel and redirection of traffic around the scene.



High Accident Locations

Computer analysis of reported accidents will be used to determine the time, day, location and cause of accidents. This information will be used by MOST officers to plan efficient monitoring of the locations for effective enforcement of violations and prevention of accidents.

Below, a MOST officer monitors traffic flow on Cherokee Road one of the city's high accident and speed complaint locations. Because of the mobility of the motorcycle and the use of stalker radar, the MOST officer is able to monitor and enforce in any direction of travel without changing locations.



School Initiatives

The MOST Unit has developed several programs to make our schools safer, before during and after the school day. During hours before and after school, when children are often walking to and from school or being transported to school, motorcycle officers monitor and enforce violations of the traffic code in and around school zones to prevent dangerous driving and harm to pedestrians. Motorcycle officers also participate in various school activities such as career day, anti-drug campaigns, educational programs and parades.



Special Events

Motorcycle officers will work any special event where a vehicle of superior acceleration and mobility is necessary or prudent. Presidential escorts, parades, torch runs, Tour DuPont are all examples of the special duties of the motorcycle officer.



Interdiction

MOST Officers have a high number of contacts with people in the city. By using various techniques including voluntary contact, search incident to arrest and certain warrantless searches, Motorcycle officers are able to seize both illegal firearms and narcotics. Teamwork is a key part of the MOST Unit and during hotspot assignments. All motorcycle officers work together to reduce crime in the selected areas.



SPECIALTIES

The MOST Unit is comprised of officers that contribute to the Department's overall goals of crime reduction. These goals are met through specialized training that is instructed department wide and also by providing aggressive street-level enforcement. Members of this unit are able to problem solve on a level far beyond their scope of responsibility. For example, the current Magistrate Video Conferencing and Arrest system was designed and implemented by members of this unit saving the City of Richmond well over \$ 600,000 a year and countless man-hours.

PERSONNEL

When a vacancy occurs in the M.O.S.T. Unit a job vacancy bulletin is distributed department wide at which time requests for transfers are collected and reviewed. Personnel interested are required to have three years of police experience from the date of graduation from the Richmond Police Academy, hold the rank of police officer, have a thorough knowledge of the Department's Sector Policing Philosophy and demonstrate a sound work ethic.

Further, officer applicants may not have more than two major preventable accidents in a three year period in order to be qualified to apply. In order to attend the rigorous eighty hour Basic Motor Operators School each officer candidate must have the physical ability to recover a downed police package Harley Davidson motorcycle a minimum of five times on both sides of the motorcycle. This simulates a small fraction of the total number of times a motorcycle will be recovered in a one day period of training at the Basic School.

All qualified applicants are required to attend a structured interview in which they are asked twenty four standardized questions that are assigned a specific point value. Example questions include; are you radar certified, how many years do you have with the department, do you have a valid motorcycle operator's license etc.... motorcycle operation is a highly visible position. Motor officers interact with the public more than ordinary patrol officers or officers in other assignments and must display a professional image that represents the department positively therefore, appearance of uniform, punctuality, demeanor, verbal communication skills and physical appearance are also taken into consideration at the time of the interview. Officers are then ranked based on the outlined format discussed in this section.

The interview panel consists of the Motor Sergeant, Master Patrol Officer, a basic Motor Officer, and a person independent of the unit. At least one of the afore mentioned interview panel members must represent a minority status.

Officers selected must pass an eighty hour Northwestern Police Motorcycle Basic School and quarterly recertification to secure their tenure in the M.O.S.T. Unit.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Each Police Package Motorcycle having sufficient storage shall be equipped with the following equipment:

First Aid Kit
Fire extinguisher
Flares
Traffic Vest
Map
Tape Measure
Rain Suit
Summons book and duty related paperwork.

Use of and Securing Equipment

- The motorcycle shall be locked and all equipment secured when left unattended.
- Only authorized equipment and accessories will be utilized.
- All equipment shall be secure when the motorcycle is in operation. Push to talk switches shall be utilized for communication while the motorcycle is in motion when possible.

Uniforms

Each motor officer is issued by the Department:

- Taylor Leather Police Motor Officer jacket.
- Standard compliment of summer and winter uniform shirts.
- Four pair of police motor breeches
- One pair of motor officer leather boots
- One Super SEER half shell police motorcycle helmet
- Set Com communication equipment
- Motorcycle specific eyewear for day and night operation.
- One pair of summer motorcycle specific duty gloves
- One pair of winter motorcycle specific duty gloves
- A full compliment of Gerbing electric heating clothing

MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTIONS

- A. All required maintenance is the responsibility of each officer. Maintenance or other problems related to the motorcycle shall be reported to the Sergeant immediately.
- B. Repairs are to be affected by authorized personnel only i.e. motor officers authorized by the Motor Sergeant who have been through necessary training and have proven experience, city garage, radio shop and Harley Davidson mechanics authorized by the City. (Any person approved by the Fleet Manager)
- C. The Motorcycle will be inspected in accordance with the T-CLOCK INSPECTION SHEET at the beginning of each tour. Any missing or defective equipment shall be reported to the Unit Sergeant for resolution or repair.
- D. Each motorcycle officer is responsible for maintaining a clean, properly functioning and properly equipped motorcycle.
- E. Each *officer* is responsible for ***following the provisions of this manual.*** (Any questions or conflicting practices regarding this manual and motorcycle operation should be directed immediately to the motor sergeant.)

Individual motorcycles and related equipment are to be inspected by daily by the assigned motor officer as stated. The unit Sergeant or Master Patrol Officer will conduct monthly equipment inspections and daily uniform and related equipment inspections. Unannounced inspections of all associated equipment may be conducted by either the Sergeant or Master Patrol Officer at anytime to ensure compliance with departmental rules and regulations.

TRAINING - QUALIFICATIONS

We provide nationally recognized motorcycle training on a multi-jurisdictional as well as departmental level. We provide officer-survival and tactical training for the department. We conduct all radar training for the department.

MOST Unit members have been to various schools and hold various certifications and are a wealth of knowledge. The certifications include but are not limited to:

1. Northwestern University Centers for Public Safety Instructor's School
2. International Police Technology and Management- University of North Florida
3. Radar Instructors
4. Firearms Instructors "Sig Arms Precision Rifle School"
5. EVOC Instructors
6. Traffic and Motorcycle Accident Investigation Certification
7. Riot and Crowd Control

All personnel who operate a police package motorcycle 1000cc or more equipped with emergency equipment *must possess a class M license and successfully complete the Northwestern Basic Police Motorcycle Operator Course*, further, quarterly testing must be passed, this includes all comparable police package motorcycles with comparable power of 1000cc or greater. Tests will be conducted by the officer on each type of motorcycle assigned to him. Testing will be administered by only officers who have been certified to instruct by having successfully passed the Northwestern Police Motorcycle Instructor Course.

Personnel who operate a police motorcycle 500cc or less without emergency equipment *must possess a class M license and successfully pass the eighty hour Richmond Police Motorcycle Dual Purpose Motorcycle Course derived from IPTM and Northwestern University. Officers must pass skills testing biannually or once every six months to ensure and document skills retention. Motorcycle certification will be motorcycle specific. Officers will only operate motorcycles they have certified on.*

Officers shall be of sufficient stature and strength to maintain control of the motorcycle and be able to upright the downed motorcycle. The officer's appearance must reflect a professional and positive image of the police department.

Only Instructors who have passed the Northwestern Police Motorcycle Instructors Course shall provide training. Instructors shall provide current training and attend updates from Northwestern University and IPTM as opportunities are provided by the Richmond Police Department.

Officers assigned to the Motor unit will train a minimum of sixteen hours a month or once every two weeks to maintain proficiency and skills retention. *Motorcycle Officers who have allowed their skills to diminish and are unable to recertify after two attempts, administered by an instructor, shall not operate a Police Package Harley Davidson Motorcycle.* Officers failing recertification after the two attempts must attend retraining by successfully completing the eighty hour Northwestern Basic Police Operators Course.

PROHIBITIONS

1. No motor officer will allow any unlicensed, untrained, unauthorized person to ride any department motorcycle.
2. The training or review of new or prospective unlicensed officers under the supervision of an instructor will be allowed for training purposes only. No other provisions for operation of a department motorcycle will be permitted.
3. Only Northwestern Certified Instructors will provide training and instruction.
4. Motor Officers shall comply with the provisions of General Orders that pertain to operation of Police Package Motorcycles.
5. Motor officers will not make or permit unauthorized modifications to the motorcycle.

6. Motor officers will not operate a motorcycle in any unsafe manner or condition.
7. Motor officers will not operate the motorcycle in any unapproved activity.
8. Motor officers will not transport a second rider unless the motorcycle is properly equipped.
9. Motor officers will not wear sunglasses at night. Only clear or an approved eyeglass will be worn at night.
10. Motor officers will not smoke while operating or refueling the motorcycle.

SUPERVISORY OFFICIALS

- A. Supervisors who operate motorcycles shall be guided by the provisions of this manual.
- B. Supervisors are to be vigilant in their efforts to ensure that all motorcycle operators are in compliance with the provisions of this manual and with the General Orders concerning motorcycles.
- C. Supervisors are to ensure all required and mandated training is SUCCESSFULLY completed by each officer in their command.
- D. Supervisors are responsible for documenting all training to include the dates and type of training involved.

Weather Extremes

- A. Police motorcycles shall not be operated in heavy rain, fog, or sub-freezing temperatures without careful consideration and review of the road conditions by the motor sergeant or unless extenuating circumstances exist such as training etc... In these cases where operation of the motorcycle will occur, appropriate protective gear will be issued.
- B. Motorcycles will not be operated on roadways that have snow or ice.
- C. In cases where the officer is caught in inclement weather that does not allow for safe operation he will take every precaution available to operate at a safe speed and to park the motorcycle at an acceptable location as soon as possible.
- D. If safe operation of the motorcycle is not possible automobiles will be utilized until safe operation of the motorcycle is possible.
- E. Extenuating circumstances can affect each of the areas discussed in sections A-D and should also be taken into consideration.

- F. Officers will complete supervised training by a certified instructor in severe conditions without sacrificing safety. This will ensure the officer has demonstrated the required skills to avoid injury or damage to the police motor in the event operation in inclement weather is required.

PERFORMANCE MEASURABILITY

- Speed Enforcement - COMSTAT Statistics (Citizen Generated Speed Complaints and School Zone Traffic Enforcement)
- Special Events Utilization
- Instruction of Mandated Training for Departmental Personnel
- Community Organizations Request For Unit Appearance